

REMARKS

The Patent Office has indicated that claims 1-48, 50, and 51 stand rejected. However, although claims 1, 4, 8, 9 and 23-31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koch, DE 4004220 in view of Badwal, et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,942,349, and claims 2, 3, 5-7, 10-22, 32-42, and 46-48 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koch, DE 4004220 in view of Natsuko, et al., GB 2278010, no rejections have been made to claims 43-45, 50, or 51. Thus, it is believed that these claims are allowable, and this Response is made on the basis of that assumption. The Examiner is invited to clarify the position of the Patent Office if different.

Applicants have rewritten claims 43, 44, and 50 in independent form. Claim 1 has been cancelled without prejudice. Other claims that previously depended from claim 1 have now been rewritten to depend from claim 44. Accordingly, no new matter has been added.

Claims 2-48, 50, and 51 remain pending for examination.

Rejection of Claims 1, 4, 8, 9, and 23-31 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 1, 4, 8, 9, and 23-31 have been rejected under U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koch, DE 4004220 ("Koch") in view of Badwal, et al, U.S. Patent No. 5,942,349 ("Badwal").

Without acceding to the correctness of this rejection, Applicants have amended the claims to depend from claims 43, 44, and 50, each now written in independent form. None of these claims stand rejected in view of Koch or Badwal. Therefore, for at least these reasons, it is believed that claims 4, 8, 9, and 23-31 are patentable in view of Koch and Badwal. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections of these claims.

Rejections of Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 10-22, 32-42, and 46-48 under 35 U.S.C. §(a)

Claims 2, 3, 5-7, 10-22, 32-42 and 46-48 have been rejected under U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Koch in view of Natsuko, GB 2278010 ("Natsuko").

Without acceding to the correctness of this rejection, Applicants have amended the claims to depend from claims 43, 44, and 50, each now written in independent form. None of these claims stand rejected in view of Koch or Natsuko. Therefore, for at least these reasons, it is believed that

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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